

Negro and Radicalism - 1930

NEGRO WORKERS TURNING TO PARTY

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In Revolt Against Super Exploitation, Tired
of Betrayals, Negroes Realizing Need
of Revolutionary Struggle

By CYRIL BRIGGS.

UNEMPLOYMENT, hunger and imperialist war and other evils of the capitalist system strike harder at the Negro masses than at any other section of the working class. It is the Negro masses who suffer most from the attempts of the bosses to solve the economic crisis of capitalism by throwing millions of workers on the streets to starve. Negro workers are the first to go. Discriminated against even in times of bosses' prosperity, they have the least reserve against unemployment. They suffer first and hardest from any attack on the standards of the working class. The victims of the most savage speed-up and bare-faced robbery on the job, they are jam-crowded into segregated ghettos and made to pay exorbitant rents for rotten accommodations. And, today, unemployment has forced hundreds of families to "double up" in order to meet the exactions of the landlords, with resultant increase in the already appallingly high death rate of Negro workers and their babies.

Starving In Midst of Plenty.

Over 8,000,000 workers are jobless today in the United States. Jobless and starving in the midst of plenty! And out of all proportion to the Negro percentage of the population is the percentage of Negro jobless. In the South, hundreds of thousands of Negroes are existing in actual starvation. In the North conditions are not much better. The most frightful suffering exists in Harlem and other segregated areas.

And what are the bosses and their political parties doing about it? They answer the demands of the working class for social insurance for the unemployed with police clubs and atrocities. They resent the fact that the unemployed refuse to starve quietly! They answer the growing solidarity of the Negro and white workers with an intensification of the lynching terror against the Negro masses. The republican national

administration attempts to conceal the depth of the crisis and minimizes the unemployment and suffering of the masses with a barrage of lying statistics. Republican and democratic state and city governments launch vicious attacks on workers' demonstrations against unemployment, savagely persecuting the unemployed delegations. The fake "socialist" party betrays the struggles of the workers by attempts to divert them into harmless and ineffective channels. The "socialist" city administration in Reading lets loose its police on the unemployed workers.

Bosses Continue Layoffs.

And in the meantime, the ruthless policy of lay-offs, speed-ups and wage cuts is being rushed through by the bosses with the open co-operation of the "socialists" and the Jim-Crow American Federation of Labor.

Negroes suffer a double oppression at the hands of the American bosses. Super-exploited as workers and oppressed as a national minority group easily identifiable by their color, they pay a bitter price for the upkeep of the vicious capitalist system. In the past, they have listened to the high-binders of the capitalist parties only to be regularly betrayed each and every time. Negro petty-bourgeois "leaders", solely concerned with obtaining position and money for themselves, have systematically lead them to the slaughter. But today there is growing evidence that the Negro masses are turning their backs on the political parties of their enemies and looking towards the Communist Party, as the only party of revolutionary struggle against lynching and other forms of white ruling class terrorism, against unemployment, against Jim-Crowism, against imperialist war, etc.

Bosses and Tools Exposed.

The sharpening of the class struggle in the United States is inevitably forcing the bosses to adopt more openly fascist methods against the

working class, and especially against the Negro workers.

The increasing terror against the Negro masses also inevitably brings about the exposure of the Negro petty bourgeoisie as tools and defenders of the very system of Negro oppression. This has happened time and again within the last eight months. The Negro masses are fast realizing the treacherous role played by the Negro petty bourgeoisie.

Rallying to Communist Party.

At the same time, the Communist Party has won the confidence of the Negro masses by its relentless struggle against race prejudice and for working class solidarity of Negro and white workers, by its fight against lynching and all forms of Negro oppression, and by its rallying of the white workers and poor farmers to the support of the struggles of the Negroes.

By intensifying its activities among and in behalf of the struggles of the Negro masses, the Communist Party will further extend its influence among them and win them for the revolutionary struggle and for the support of the Communist election campaigns which are steps on the road toward the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system with its race hatred and lynching and for the establishment of a workers' and farmers' government which will, as in Soviet Russia, wipe out all race lines and abolish all forms of racial and economic oppression.

MEXICAN AND NEGRO SALMON BOAT CREWS ROBBED BY BOSSES, STATE

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Men Terribly Exploited by "Contract" System
and Robbed of the Miserable Wages They Get

San Francisco, Cal.

Daily Worker:

The Biennial Report (1927-1928) of the California State Bureau of Labor Statistics reports "progress" in its work of "supervising" the paying off of Alaska salmon boat crews, which "supervision" was begun in 1913 in accordance with act of legislation that year.

Section 3 of Act reads in part: "The commissioner shall . . . allow or reject any deductions made from wages provided, however, that he shall reject all deductions made for gambling debts . . . and for liquor sold to the employe during such employment."

Contract Workers.

er, the "gents" furnisher, who in turn sublets the contract to some Chinese compradore. These workers before they are allowed to ship are forced to buy "or order" in Mayer's store at least \$30 worth of shoddy goods.

Robbed by Bosses.

On the boat and throughout the whole season, which may last three months, the men are plied with booze, kept drunk and systematical-ly robbed by gamblers and dope peddlers working under the protection of the packers and under the "supervision" of the packers' government agency—the State Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Unmentionable fees flourish on the ships and under indescribable conditions of filth and misery the workers toil while there is fish and while there is daylight. It is well to mention at this point that the Alaska night is very short—there being perhaps 21 or 22 hours of daylight out of the 24.

The biennial report of the government gives as the latest figures for these for the year 1926. Seven ships with 686 men had \$7,350.00 advanced before sailing and had \$42,781.23 other reductions, leaving a balance of \$85,575.27 due on return out of a total "earnings" of \$135,706.30. This gives the average as \$124.74 which average includes the relatively "high" wage paid the "skilled" worker.

In this year of capitalist rationalization, in this year of "economic

These are the facts: Most of the workers sent to Alaska are Chinese, Mexican, Filipinos or Negroes. They are "recruited" by private "employment agencies" whose services are engaged by Mayer Bros., owners of a "gents" furnishing business on Grant Ave., San Francisco. And the workers are paid off on their return—that is those who do return—in the offices of Mr. Mayer and in the presence of a deputy from the State Bureau of Labor Statistics. These workers, five or six hundred of them, are contract labor supplied to the Glasgow Packing Co., subsidiary of the California Packing Corporation, by Mr. Mayer.

crisis," of "overproduction" and of intensified exploitation let us look back to the "good times" of 1926 and the happy situation of what the government agency of the packers euphemistically calls the "cannery hands."

The deductions include over \$3,000 for a school tax! \$1,074 for "cleaning ship and launch hire" and \$30,082.73 or 60 per cent of the wages was deducted for merchandise in the Frisco store of Mayer.

Finally, in the figures for 1927 it is stated in the government report that the deductions to cover items bought in San Francisco are not shown. As the report with callous cynicism brutally puts it: " . . . the reason for this omission is that Mayer failed to show the amount of merchandise bought and ordered by the cannery hands before they had been paid off."

Forward to Struggle.

Let us look back, but let us also look forward to the rising revolutionary struggle in China, in the Philippines, in the South and here on the coast where the growing resentment of the workers of all nationalities is being organized by the Communist Party and the Trade Union Unity League and which will overthrow this damnable system and establish a proletarian dictatorship and a workers and farmers government.